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ABSTRACT

This annotated list of nine bibliographies in the fields of adult basic education, reading, and writing is the first step in guiding adult literacy programs, especially in New York City, to choose the best and most appropriate materials for use by their students and staff. The bibliographies have three important characteristics: (1) wide range of materials from a variety of sources or materials not easily found elsewhere; (2) clear, accurate, and informative annotations; and (3) focus on reading and writing for English speakers who read at 0 to eighth-grade levels. The bibliographies describe a range of materials for these purposes: general interest, reading for enjoyment, reading in the content areas/life skills, reading and language texts or workbooks, and writing. The annotations include information in this format: title, compiler(s), date of publication, target population (students), staff and type of program suggested for reading level (and what this is based on, if given), selection policy (a brief description or list of criteria, if given), annotation (often includes sample entry, mentions special features and gaps), and ordering information. (YLB)

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GETTING STARTED:

Adult Education, Reading, and Writing

An Annotated List of Bibliographies
for Youth and Adult Literacy Programs

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Literacy Assistance Center, Inc.
51 Chambers Street, Room 510
New York, N.Y. 10007
(212) 267-5309

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The Literacy Assistance Center, Inc. (LAC), is an independent not-for-profit organization whose mission is to promote the expansion of effective literacy instruction in New York City. The LAC does not operate classes or tutoring programs. Rather, its primary focus is to support the institutions, public and private, which provide literacy services -- the Board of Education, the City University of New York, the public libraries, and community-based organizations -- and strengthen the links among them. Its activities are designed to meet the needs of teachers and teachers' assistants, librarians, tutors, community workers, administrators, policy-makers, funders, private industry representatives, and others interested in literacy.

The LAC was incorporated in March, 1983, as a result of recommendations made in the report, Literacy and New York City's High School Aged Youth, by the Literacy Task Force of the Mayor's Office of Youth Services and the High School Division of the Board of Education. Since that time, the LAC has been active as a source of information and assistance for the greater New York literacy community. The LAC draws on the input and expertise of practitioners in providing services both to programs and to the field. These services enable us to recognize and contribute to the on-going development of a unified professional community of diverse literacy providers.

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INTRODUCTION

Getting Started is a bibliography of bibliographies: an annotated list of bibliographies in the fields of adult basic education, reading and writing. It is the first step in guiding adult literacy programs to choose the best and most appropriate materials for use by their students and staff. Of the many comprehensive and selected bibliographies of adult and youth materials available, it cites only a small number that we think will be most immediately useful to literacy programs in New York City. The list will be revised and updated as new bibliographies become available or older ones are recommended, and as programs report on this list's effectiveness.

The bibliographies were selected because they have three important characteristics:

1. They include a wide range of materials from a variety of sources, or they include materials not easily found elsewhere.

2. Their annotations are clear, accurate and informative.

3. They focus on reading and writing for English speakers who read at 0 to 8th grade levels.*

The annotations and descriptions of these bibliographies provide information on several important questions, but it is useful to emphasize some of those questions here. First, it is important to note that each bibliography has its own selection policy and reflects its compilers' point of view. Two of the best, for instance, were compiled especially for use by programs providing instruction by volunteer tutors. Among their criteria for selection, therefore, is the ease with which a book or pamphlet can be used by a relatively untrained tutor in a one-to-one setting. Thus, the compilers may have excluded materials requiring an experienced professional's judgement or those designed to take advantage of group instruction.

Second, many of the best bibliographies were compiled for library-based programs, so that the person who selected materials and wrote the annotations may not have had experience using them in an instructional setting. In many bibliographies compiled by non-teachers, there is a lack of information given about the materials' approach to reading or writing instruction. Therefore, a good rule to follow is: Never purchase any material sight unseen, if you can possibly avoid it. Any material you consider for purchase should be examined closely, preferably by the person who will actually use it. Publishers will usually supply examination copies, and it is a good idea to request them. Once you have a book or other material

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* The Literacy Assistance Center is preparing other lists of bibliographies on learning and teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), on useful educational computer software, and on professional materials.

in hand, you can use one of these bibliographies, as well as your own experience, to judge whether it is likely to be useful to you.*

The Literacy Assistance Center's developing clearinghouse**, and other resource centers of literacy or adult education materials, make materials available for examination or demonstration. Before purchasing materials, therefore, call (or visit, if possible) one of the following centers to get some indication of the usefulness of certain materials for your program:

Literacy Assistance Center, Inc.
51 Chambers Street, Room 510
New York, NY 10007
(212) 267-5309
Contact: Richard Sterling, Executive Director

Adult Education Resource Center
Jersey City State College
Jersey City, NJ 07305
(201) 547-3101/3132
Contact: Carrie Weir, Director

Adult Education Resource Center
Glassboro State College
307 Girard Road
Glassboro, NJ 08028
(609) 863-7131
Contact: Harold Sahm, Director

Community and Continuing Education Information Service
New York State Department of Education
Room 330, EB
Albany, NY 12234
(518) 474-3639
Contact: Glenn Schechtman

Connecticut Adult Education Staff Development Center
25 Wolf Pit Road
Farmington, CT 06032
(203) 674-8378
Contact: Marc Potish

National Adult Education Clearinghouse
Montclair State College
Upper Montclair, NJ 07043
(201) 893-4353
Contact: Frances M. Spinelli, Director

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* These suggestions and others are included in the LAC's "How to Select Materials" sheet.

** The LAC's Clearinghouse should have materials available for examination and loan by January, 1985.

HOW TO USE THE ANNOTATIONS

Most of the bibliographies listed here are of general interest. They describe a range of materials for various purposes, including:

- Reading for enjoyment: primarily fiction and non-fiction materials that are most often read for pleasure, but that may be used as an integral part of the instructional curriculum, as well,

- Reading in the content areas/life skills: materials that address such issues or student needs as employment, health, money management, or government. They may also include non-fiction or even fiction titles that provide the reader with information about history, science, social studies, etc.,

- Reading and language texts or workbooks: these include such features as vocabulary lists, comprehension questions, language-related activities, dialogues or tests,

- Writing: Materials that teach or assist literacy students in the process of writing, or that draw clear connections between the learning of reading and writing.

The annotations include information in a regular format, so those using this list can most easily compare the entries. The items in each entry are:

Title
Compiler(s)
Date of Publication
Target population (students)
Suggested for (staff and type of program)
Reading level (and what this is based on, if given)
Selection policy (a brief description or list of criteria if given)
Annotation (often includes sample entry, mentions special features and gaps)
Ordering information

* *

Getting Started was prepared by Bonne August for the Literacy Assistance Center, after Dan Rabideau made the phone calls and orders necessary to collect all of these bibliographies and others. Verna Haskins Denny and Marcie Wolfe provided many useful recommendations, as did several other staff members of the LAC.

We hope that the users of this list will suggest new bibliographies for an updated version, or will remind us of those we may have omitted. This is, after all, a guide for practitioners; with your input, it will be as effective a guide as possible.

Ellen Lippmann
Clearinghouse Coordinator
October, 1984

BIBLIOGRAPHIES OF GENERAL INTEREST

Title: ABE Reading Bibliography

Compiler: Carrie Robinson Weir

Date: not given

Target Population: Students in an adult education program staffed by professional teachers

Suggested for: Adult programs (0-7.0) staffed by professional teachers

Reading Level: 0-8, as determined by publisher; most below 5.0

Selection Policy: Materials useful for practice, "assuming that the teacher has already laid the necessary foundation of skills and/or concepts." Excludes materials that teach reading skills in isolation.

This bibliography has a very specific purpose, to provide relevant reinforcement of skills already presented by the teacher. Almost all of the materials come from major publishers. The selection is varied but not large; it includes some high interest, low readability leisure reading.

Ordering Information:

Adult Education Resource Center
Jersey City State College
Jersey City, NJ 07305

(201) 547-3101/3132

Title: Bibliography of Basic Materials: Reading, English as a Second Language (Literacy Volunteers of America)

Compiler: Barbara J. MacDonald

Date: 1980

Target Population: Not stated, but Literacy Volunteers generally serves adults reading approximately 0-5.0

Suggested for: Developed for volunteer tutors, but useful for all programs, especially those serving adults reading 0-5.0

Reading Level: For some materials the readability level was determined using the Fry Readability Formula, coded to the levels of LVA's READ Test; for other materials, the publisher's reading level is given. Although no policy is stated, instructional materials do not go above level 6 and most are lower. For other materials levels 6-7 are the maximum.

Selection Policy: No policy is stated; however, the bibliography reprints the checklist developed by the Basic Education and Reading Committee of the International Reading Association. This checklist addresses content, format, attitude, function, process, and relevance of materials.

The Literacy Volunteers Bibliography lists both instructional material and reading for information and enjoyment, arranged according to reading level. Annotations are descriptive (no publication dates are given, however); for example, the entry for Steck-Vaughn's Reading Through English, Book I, reads:

> *Low-vocabulary, high interest reading for adult students. This book teaches a wide range of skills and is well-illustrated with photographs. Story situations are set in urban areas and have multi-ethnic appeal. A bound-in answer key makes these books self-correcting for adults who are able to work independently.*

The outstanding feature of this bibliography is the extensive and comprehensive list, organized by reading level, of materials students can read. The selection takes into account the widely varied interests of adult literacy students and their need for many different things to read -- from fiction to auto mechanics to psychology to poetry.

Although the Literacy Volunteers Bibliography has a less attractive format than some of the others, it is a very practical resource that will get a lot of use. Recommended, especially if supplemented by the LEARN or VITAL bibliographies (pages 8 and 15, respectively).

Ordering Information:

Literacy Volunteers of America
404 Oak Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

(315) 474-7039

Cost: $6.00

Title: Books for Adult New Readers

Compiler: Roberta Luther O'Brien

Date: 1982

Target Population: English speaking adults, 18+, reading 0-7.0

Suggested for: Developed by librarians for use in tutorial and independent study programs, but useful for any adult literacy program, especially at the 0-5.0 level.

Reading Level: 0-7.0 on Gunning Fog Index; 60% of materials are 0-5.0

Selection Policy: Includes materials which emphasize "teaching of basic skills and general information rather than those which provide instruction in the minute details of various coping skills." Other criteria include a suitable format, adult characters and situations, an unstereotyped point of view, and suitability for library circulation (thus, there are no kits or consumables).

Books for New Adult Readers is a very well-designed resource for programs serving adults who are reading at 0-5.0. It lists titles in the areas of:

Reading for Enjoyment
Reading in the Content Areas/Life Skills
Reading and Language Tests and Workbooks
Math

The instructional materials include a range of approaches. The annotations stress possibilities for use. For example, the entry for the Scott, Foresman Comprehension series states:

> *A program of reading selections and questions, in 24 paperback booklets, for the development of reading comprehension. The booklets are in four subject groupings -- Coping, Cultures, Messages, and People -- and progress in reading difficulty within each grouping. Books at the same reading level cover the same skills. The readings are interesting and the exercises pertinent. The format and layout of the books is adult, with the possible exception of the overlarge type in Level A books. Since the booklets may be purchased separately and each is self-contained, the program is highly flexible and can be adapted in a number of ways to a library's clientele and budget.*

A particularly helpful component is an annotated list of series.

The leisure reading section of the LEARN bibliography is limited to titles written or adapted for low level readers and published by educational publishers. Programs with students above 5.0 would probably want additional titles. For the beginning level literacy program, however, Books for Adult New Readers is highly recommended.

Ordering Information:

Project: LEARN
2238 Euclid Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44115

(216) 621-9483

Cost: $5.00

Title: Literacy Resources: An Annotated Check List for Tutors and Librarians

Compiler: Jane-Carol Heiser

Date: 1983

Target Population: Adult Basic Education, High School Equivalency, and English as a Second Language students, reading 0-12 (for ESL, 12+)

Suggested for: Developed for library tutorial and independent study programs, but could be used by any adult program

Reading Level: 0-12 (12+ for ESL); publishers' reading levels are used. Most materials are 0-7.0

Selection Policy: Items in the Enoch Pratt Library's (Baltimore, MD) collection found to be most useful

Literacy Resources lists both print and non-print material, arranged according to reading level. Entries note whether materials can be used independently. Materials are included from the following categories:

Reading for Enjoyment
Reading in the Content Areas/Life Skills
Reading and Language Texts and Workbooks
Math

Some series titles are listed separately. Annotations are descriptive, with emphasis on use. For example, the Steck-Vaughn Adult Reading Series is described:

> *This fifteen-book series is divided into two sections. Reading 1100-1700 covers prereading skills, sight words, and phonics, and has audio cassettes for reinforcement. Reading 2100-2800 covers comprehension skills such as finding the main idea, relationships/conclusions, sequence, locating and organizing information, reading maps, graphs, tables, and other materials. The selections are life-skill oriented. Ending volumes go to eighth grade level. Answers appear in student book on pages following the exercises so that students can easily check answers before proceeding. Teacher's manual could be more detailed for the inexperienced tutor.*

While this is a well-designed resource, its narrow scope limits its usefulness to other kinds of programs. The sources of materials, although adequate, are limited to the major publishers; therefore, the information largely duplicates that available elsewhere. Like several other bibliographies designed for library-based tutors, the leisure reading section is better than the instructional section, but here again, generally only well-known educational publishers are used.

Ordering Information:

Enoch Pratt Free Library Literacy Resource Center
400 Cathedral Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

(301) 396-1937

Cost: $5.00

Title: Reader Development Bibliography

Compiler: Melissa Forinash Buckingham (Reader Development Program, Philadelphia Free Library)

Date: 1982

Target Population: Adults reading below 8.0

Suggested for: Developed by librarians for library-based tutorial and independent study programs, but appropriate for any program with adult students reading below 8.0

Reading Level: 0-8.0 on the Gunning Fog Index

Selection Policy: Stated criteria include level; subjects of interest to students aged 14 and older; style not patronizing or simplistic; attractive format with suitable type size and good illustrative material.

The Reader Development Bibliography begins with an excellent discussion of how to choose material; it then upholds its own high standards by not only describing but evaluating the materials it lists, including individual items in series. For example, it evaluates A Realistic Job Search, part of the McGraw Hill Lifeworks Series:

> *This volume covers writing resumes and other letters, making telephone calls to arrange for interviews, taking tests, and going for interviews. Exercises are plentiful, but vary widely in usefulness. Some, especially those which include sample tests, are excellent. Others are simplistic and repetitive. For the more sophisticated job-seeker.*

This bibliography covers a wide range of material, including:

Reading for Enjoyment
Reading in the Content Areas/Life Skills
Reading and Language Texts and Materials
Math

It is especially strong in the Life Skills, Content Areas, and Enjoyment sections. The limitations of the Reader Development Bibliography are in the sections on instructional materials. Here, perhaps because of the specific situation for which the bibliography was compiled, the titles are limited to the most traditional and narrow approaches. While the Scott, Foresman Comprehension series is not included, for example, the Dixon English series, the Laubach Reading series, and English 2200 are recommended.

The Reader Development Bibliography is definitely worth having. No other bibliography examined has this kind of analytic approach to materials selection. Because of the limited usefulness of the section on instructional materials, however, programs will probably want to own another bibliography -- perhaps the VITAL or LEARN -- as well.

Ordering Information:

New Readers Press
Publishing Division of Laubach Literacy International
Box 131
1320 Jamesville Avenue
Syracuse, NY 13210

(315) 422-9121

Cost: $9.95

ISBN 0-88336-577-4

Title: Selected Materials 1983-84

Compiler: Carole Pizzillo

Date: 1983

Target Population: Adults reading 0-12.0

Suggested for: Adult education programs staffed by professional teachers

Reading Level: Publishers' levels are given, when available; 0-GED level

Selection Policy: Sample of materials that are varied in content and in level of difficulty

This bibliography, prepared by the Glassboro State College Adult Education Resource Center, includes materials in these categories:

Reading for Enjoyment
Reading in the Content Areas/Life Skills
Reading and Language Texts and Workbooks
Math

Instructional materials are varied in approach. Annotations are descriptive; for example, here is the entry for Read On!, published by Literacy Volunteers of America:

> *This series of ten (10) sequential readers, by the author of the READ test, (listed in the Test section), takes the non-reading adult up to level five (5) approximately. Adult themes and survival vocabulary, logical skills development, and page-by-page instructions for the teacher/tutor make it very usable. There are accompanying workbooks and a Teacher's guide.*

This bibliography, while offering a fairly good selection, is neither as extensive nor as well-designed as some of the others listed.

Ordering Information:

Adult Education Resource Center
Glassboro State College
307 Girard Road
Glassboro, NJ 08028

(609) 863-7131

Title: The VITAL Bibliography: A Basic Collection of Books and Learning Materials for an Adult Literacy Program

Compilers: Susanne Nolan and Nan Hawkins

Date: 1982

Target Population: Adult new readers in a tutorial program

Suggested for: Developed for tutors in a library-based program, but recommended for any program serving adults reading 0-8.0

Reading Level: 0-11.5 on the Gunning Fog Index; most materials listed are 2.5-8.0

Selection Policy: Gives "priority to interests of the adult learners . . . and to materials that will prepare them to meet the literacy needs of everyday life." Other criteria include variety, appeal of format, and suitability of style.

The VITAL Bibliography is one of the most comprehensive available, in terms of the kinds and variety of materials it lists. These include:

Reading for Enjoyment
Reading in the Content Areas/Life Skills
Reading and language texts and workbooks (including games, word cards, periodicals)
Math
Adult Literacy Curriculum Guides/Training Programs

Annotations are clear and consistent with the selection policy. The descriptions of the Adult Reading: Comprehension series published by Scott, Foresman, states:

> *Each book contains several well-written and interesting passages about people, or about coping in today's world. Questions covering both literal and inferential comprehension follow each passage. The books are of graduated difficulty, corresponding approximately with grade levels 1-6.*

Another popular series, the Lifeworks Series, published by McGraw Hill, is described as follows:

> *This series is characterized by an excellent format featuring a dialogue introducing a point, then exercises and selected activities. The tone is very adult, yet the vocabulary is kept simple. The good use of photographs and the layout result in a very attractive and manageable book for adult new readers.*

Although, unlike some other bibliographies, The VITAL Bibliography does not evaluate individual titles in series, the variety of materials it includes and its easy-to-use format make it very worthwhile. Highly recommended.

Ordering Information:

VITAL
Monroe County Public Library
303 East Kirkwood
Bloomington, IN 47401

(812) 339-2271

Cost: $5.00

SPECIALIZED BIBLIOGRAPHIES

Title: Easy to Read Books for Teenagers: A Selected List

Compilers: Leslie Charles, Office of Young Adult Services, New York Public Library

Date: 1984 (and yearly)

Target Population: Teenagers, but many titles appropriate for adults

Suggested for: Compiled for librarians, but could be used by anyone looking for interesting fiction and non-fiction for youth or adults reading at low levels.

Reading Level: Not specified, but titles for approximately 1st to 4th grade levels are starred

Selection Policy: Easy to read; proven to be popular

Some of these titles are appropriate only for young people, but many would be of interest to adults as well -- especially in the non-fiction section. Each entry has a one-line description, e.g.:

Schurman, Dewey

ATHLETIC FITNESS. Atheneum

A Guide to Training and Conditioning

The New York Public Library has compiled a number of lists of reading and informational materials for specific populations, as have the other public library systems in the City.

Ordering Information:

New York Public Library
Office of Young Adult Services
455 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10016

(212) 340-0907,07,09

Title: Good Reading for Poor Readers

Compiler: George D. Spache

Date: rev. 1978

Target Population: Compiled for children, but many of the titles are not children's books

Suggested for: teachers or tutors in any adult or youth program

Reading Level: 2-7 according to the Dale-Chall or Spache formulas; interest level also given

Selection Policy: Balance of reading level and interest

Although Spache's book was not designed for adult programs, it has an abundance of useful material not available elsewhere. Most bibliographies include leisure reading material from only a limited number of sources, most of which are educational publishers. Spache lists dozens of titles, including both classics in simplified versions and young people's material appropriate for adults. Both reading level and interest levels are given, thus making the selection process easier. For example:

> *Peterson, Helen Stone. Sojourner Truth. Champaign: Garrard Publ. 1972. R.L. 4.0, I.L. 4 up. Despite her lowly birth, Sojourner played a significant role in achieving black equality and women's rights.*

The sections of Spache's book that adult programs would probably find most valuable are Trade Books Useful for Poor Readers; Adapted and Simplified Materials; and Textbooks, Workbooks, and Games.

Ordering Information:

Garrard Publishing Company
1607 North Market Street
Champaign, IL 61820

(217) 352-7685

Cost: $5.95

ISBN: 0-8116-6013-3

ADDITIONS

Since this list was compiled, a couple of other bibliographies have been recommended. They are:

Adult Literacy: An Annotated Bibliography

Compiled by Francis E. Kazemek, Eastern Washington University, and Pat Rigg, Center for Expansion of Language and Thinking, in Tucson, AZ. 1984. Published by the International Reading Association, Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714. (302) 731-1600

A Selected Bibliography of Functional Literacy Materials for Adult Learners

Compiled by Joann LaPerla Berg and Virginia A. Wallace, Adult Education Resource Center, Montclair State College, Upper Montclair, NJ.
(To order, see address for National Adult Education Clearinghouse, p.2.)